

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 1-9 were previously pending in this application. By this amendment, Applicant is amending claims 1 and 8. New claims 10-20 have been added and no claims have been canceled. As a result, claims 1-20 are pending for examination with claims 1 and 13 being independent claims. No new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's finding that claims 4 and 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims. Claims 4 and 5 have not been rewritten into independent form, but each depends on independent claim 1, which is believed to be allowable for the reasons discussed below.

Minor Claim Amendments

As discussed below, Applicant has amended claim 1 to clarify that the preformed channel is made of injection molded *plastic*.

Applicant has also amended claim 8 to change "connector" with "connection". This is consistent with the claim terminology in independent claim 1 and eliminates an antecedent basis problem.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3, 6, 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Heimann (U.S. Patent No. 5,297,735). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

As amended, independent claim 1 recites a water dispensing head for connection to a water supply which includes an outer body of injection molded plastic and an injection molded *plastic* preformed channel for conducting water therethrough. The outer body is injection molded about the preformed molded channel where an interlocking connection is formed between the outer body and the channel. Claim 1 was amended to clarify that the preformed channel is made of injection molded plastic. Thus, both the outer body and the preformed channel are made of injection molded plastic.

Heimann is directed to a hand shower which includes a water feed tube 3 contained within a housing 1. The housing 1 is made up of lower and upper parts 11, 12 which are assembled together like a hinge and are secured together with screws. Heimann specifies that since water does not normally directly contact the upper and lower parts 11, 12 of the housing, the housing can be made of any material and mentions plastic. (Heimann, Col 4, lines 18-29). Heimann further discloses a male coupling part 4 which is used to connect a supply hose to the hand shower. Latch elements 2 are provided to secured the male coupling part 4 to the housing 1 and the lower end 33 of the water feed tube is shaped to fit snugly over the male coupling part 4.

As an initial matter, Heimann does not teach or suggest an injection molded plastic preformed channel as recited in independent claim 1. Although Heimann specifies that the housing 1 may be made of plastic, Heimann does not specify any type of material for the water feed tube 3. In fact, Heimann states that since water does not normally contact the housing, the housing may be made of plastic. This statement suggests that the water feed tube, which is in direct contact with water, is made of a material other than plastic.

Heimann also does not teach or suggest an outer body that is injection molded about a preformed molded channel as recited in independent claim 1. As mentioned above, to assemble the hand shower of Heimann, the lower and upper parts of the housing may open up like a hinge to accommodate the water feed tube. Then, the upper and lower parts may be closed and secured together with screws. There is no teaching or suggestion in Heimann to injection mold the housing about the preformed water feed tube. It is respectfully submitted that in Heimann, the various components which form the housing are preformed and *then* assembled together with other components to form the shower head. This is unlike claim 1, where the outer body is injection molded about the preformed molded channel.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Heimann. Claims 3, 6, 7 and 9 all depend from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action, claims 2 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heimann.

Without acceding to the propriety of this rejection, claims 2 and 8 depend from independent claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons set forth above. Accordingly, the rejection of these claims over Heimann should be withdrawn.

New Claims

Applicant has added new claims 10-20, including independent claim 13 to further define the invention. Support for the new claims may be found at least on page 5, lines 8-26, page 6, line 8 – page 7 line 23, and in FIGS 2, 7 and 8.

New independent claim 13 is directed to a method of forming a water dispensing head for connection to a water supply. The method comprises the steps of providing an injection molded preformed channel for conducting water therethrough, and injection molding an outer plastic body about the preformed channel, where an interlocking connection is formed between the outer body and the channel. Heimann does not teach or suggest this method of forming a water dispensing head. In contrast, Heimann teaches assembling the hand shower with all preformed components.

New claims 14-20 depend from new claim 13 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 27.

New claims 10-12 depends from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Furthermore, the recitation “wherein the projecting knobs are integrally molded with the tubular member” in new dependent claim 10 is neither disclosed nor suggested by Heimann. At most, Heimann discloses separate components, such as a latching element 2 or the male coupling part 4 which act to contact the inner surface of the housing.

Also, the recitation “wherein the outer body is injection molded about the preformed molded channel such that the outer body is a unitary formed component” in new dependent claim 11 is also neither disclosed or suggested by Heimann. In Heimann, the housing is not a unitary formed component because it includes two parts which are secured together like a hinge.

Finally, the recitation “wherein the interlocking connection is formed directly between the outer body and the channel” in dependent claim 12 is also neither disclosed or suggested by Heimann. In Heimann, there is no direct interlocking connection between the housing and the

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water feed tube. Any connecting is through other components, such as the male coupling part 4 or the latching element 2.

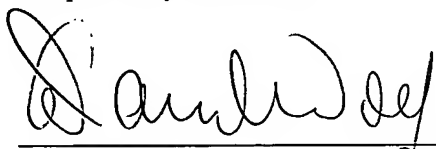
CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,

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